According to the EXIM Policy, Basmati rice is allowed to be exported freely and non-basmati rice is allowed to be exported upto 10 lakh MTs during a good year of production. There is no Minimum Export Price both for Basmati and non-Basmati rice at present. The Government have taken a series of measures to create an environment which is conducive to export of agricultural commodities including Basmati rice. Some such steps are : the facility to set up 100% export oriented Units, eligibility to import capital goods on concessional duty, availability of concessional credit, simplification of pre-shipment inspection procedures etc.

The Indian Exports of Basmati rice are Competitive inter-nationally and have been showing sustained growth for the last few years. Indian non-Basmati Superfine rice is, however, not very competitive internationally at present. The following quantities of Basmati rice and non-Basmati rice (approximately). has been exported for the last few years :—

(Figs. in Lakh Tonnes)

Year	Basmati rice	Non-Basmati rice
1991-92	2.57	4.12
1992-93	3.25	2.56
1993-94	5.36	2.69
1994-95 (upto Oct.)	2.60	0.45

Corruption in FCI

1545. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item captioned : "It's bureaucrats vs public in FCI" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated 28th September, 1994 wherein it has been stated that (i) foodgrains worth FOUR LAKH TONNES have disappeared from the public distribution system being managed by the FCI within last one month; (ii) transition losses have mounted without any action being taken by the FCI; (iii) there is complete chaos in the administration of the FCI; (iv) there is no account of Rs. 1.25 crore of the provident fund of the FCI employees; (vi) the top officials of FCI have granted for themselves perquisites which even very senior officials are not entitled to in Government; (vi) there is corruption in the FCI;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the points stated above; and

(c) what is the proposal to get these allegations verified by an independent agency ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The various items mentioned against part (a) of the question are dealth with in seriatum as under : —

(i) No, Sir.

(ii) No, Sir. In fact there has been a decline in losses because of persistent efforts made by FCI. As a result of these efforts, the overall losses have come down from 1.49% in the year 91-92 to 0.95% (provisional) during 1993-94.

(iii) No, Sir, The Food Corporation of India is functioning smoothly.

(iv) 2 cases of defalcation of Rs. 59.87 lakhs from CPF accounts have been noticed recently and taking into account the interest element upto 31-3-1994 the amount comes to Rs. 1.26 crores. The Board of Directors of FCI has approved the reimbursement of the said amount to the CPF Trust. The cases of defalcatin have been entrusted to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

(v) The top officials of the Corporation are granted perquisites based on the guidelines of the Government.

(vi) Instances of corruption whenever they come to the notice of the Corporation are being dealt with promptly.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b), there is no proposal to get the allegations verified by an independent agency.

Use of Airstrips for Storing Stocks of Foodgrains

1546. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to utilise several airstrips in the country, which are in a State of disuse at present for storing the stocks of procured foodgrains;

(b) if so, what will be the additional storing capacity as a result thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to create additional open storage in a number of States; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) and (b) Food Corporation of India has taken over an Airstrip at Tadepaligudem (Andhra Pradesh) which accommodates approximately 1.20 lakh Metric Tonnes of wheat under cover and plinth (CAP) storage.

(c) and (d) Food Corporation of India envisages creation of additional open storage capacity by resorting to following means :

(i) utilisation of all the available vacant lands in the existing depot complexes.

(ii) utilisation of lands taken over for construction of godowns but where the construction is delayed. Such sites would be utilised temporarily for open storage.

(iii) Hiring of large tracts of open lands for building large open storage complexes.

(iv) utilisation of abandoned Airstrips in the country, wherever available.

Sugar Levy Price Case

1547. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH :
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the Business Standard of September 3, 1994 under the caption, "Supreme Court slams Government in sugar levy price case";

(b) if so, whether the Supreme Court in its judgement passed strictures against the Union Food Ministry for not encashing bank guarantees given by sugar mills and not determining the disputed levy price for six years from 1975 as ordered by the Court in 1993;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for not encashing bank guarantees given by the Sugar Mills and not determining the disputed levy price as directed by the Supreme Court; and

(d) how the matter stands at present ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A copy of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 2-9-1994, in this regard, is given at Annexure [*See* Appendix 172, Annexure No. 36-A];

(c) and (d) The implementation of the original Supreme Court Judgement dated 22nd Sept., 1993 could not be undertaken as an application had been moved by the Government in the Supreme court seeking its direction/clarifications of the judgement. After the dismissal of this application by the Supreme Court on 2nd Sept., 1994. Further action has been initiated for encashment of the Bank Guarantees involved to the extent of 50 per cent of the amount. Letters for the aforesaid partial encashment have thereafter been issued to all concerned. About Rs. 16 crores have already been realised.

Sugar Allocation to States

1548. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN :
SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) what was the total sugar allocation state-wise for the month of October-November 92, October-November 93 and October-November, 94;

(b) what were the prevailing prices during October-November 92, October-November 93 and October-November 1994, statewise;

(c) whether it is a fact that large quotas were released to Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh due to elections; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that due to glot of sugar in the market the rates slumped in the states of Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh in comparison to other States ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) The allocations of levy sugar (including festival quota) for the months of October-November 1992, October-November, 1993 and October-November, 1994, are given in the statement at Annexure [*See* Appendix 172,